



King County

VETERANS AND HUMAN SERVICES LEVY 2008 STRATEGY AREA ANNUAL REPORTS

Activity 2.8

Link educational, vocational and employment opportunities to housing and supportive services

OBJECTIVE

The Levy's investment in Strategy 2 focuses on ending long-term homelessness through a variety of interventions including identification, outreach, prevention, housing, supportive services and education. Activity 2.8 is designed to link educational, vocational and employment opportunities to housing and supportive services. Investment areas contribute toward:

- Expansion of existing education, employment and vocational training programs for the homeless or formerly homeless;
- Expansion of child care services that enable parents to work; and
- Dental care vouchers for those whose oral health poses a barrier to finding or maintaining employment.

POPULATION FOCUS

This activity serves very low-income individuals and veterans (at or below 175 percent federal poverty level), including those who are homeless or formerly homeless, and are experiencing multiple barriers to stable employment and housing.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Through this activity, Levy funds have been awarded to enhance existing programs that provide employment and housing services in King County. Projects utilize employment-focused case management services that are customized to individual client needs and goals. Services include:

- Assessment of client's employment, housing, and other needs;
- Preparation for work, training or other work-related opportunities;
- Job readiness, search, and placement assistance;
- Referrals for additional services;
- Assistance obtaining needed work supports;
- Client benefits planning; and
- Retention services to assist clients in maintaining stable employment and housing.

The outcome for this program is increased participation in paid employment and/or employment activities, and improved housing stability that help vulnerable, at-risk households achieve greater independence and self-sufficiency.

PROGRESS DURING 2008

Two Request for Proposal (RFP) processes were conducted in 2008 to link education and employment services to housing and supportive services. Services funded through the first RFP began in August and September of 2008. Those funded through the second RFP did not begin until February of 2009. Agencies that began providing services in 2008 are listed in the table below.

Several of the contract agencies are providing employment services to clients on-site at transitional housing facilities, as well as targeting a range of low-income populations with significant barriers to employment and housing, including young adults in transitional housing, ex-offenders, and immigrant and refugees. In addition, three projects include formal partnerships between provider agencies:

- Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) and Pioneer Human Services (PHS) are providing job training and placement services to ex-offenders.
- The YWCA is providing employment services at Solid Ground's Sand Point family transitional housing.

Agencies (providing services in 2008)	Veterans Funds Awarded	Human Services Funds	Levy Funds Awarded (2006-2008 funds)
Friends of Youth		92,245	92,245
Hopelink		99,167	99,167
Neighborhood House		224,287	224,287
Seattle Jobs Initiative		255,000	255,000
YouthCare		99,166	99,166
YWCA		255,000	255,000
Valley Cities Counseling & Consultation	100,000	46,108	146,108
Total	100,000	1,070,973	1,170,973

Two additional agencies received awards in the second RFP process and are scheduled to begin providing services in February, 2009. They are Training, Rehabilitation, Assessment and Consultation (TRAC) Associates and the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (both funded with Veterans Levy Funds). All funds available for this activity have now been committed and no additional RFP processes are planned.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Number Served. In 2008, 195 individuals from around the county were enrolled in project services through this strategy, and 39 had increased their income and were working on stabilizing their housing.

Total Served	East	North	Seattle	South
195	34	8	79	55

The recent downturn in the economy is one of the most pressing challenges facing the agencies and their clients. Further, addressing the numerous and significant barriers many clients face, including homelessness, limited work history and job skills, physical and mental health issues, criminal history and lack of education, also presents serious challenges to increasing and maintaining clients' stability over time.

Agencies seek to link clients to additional job training and educational opportunities that will further support longer term outcomes toward improved employment, housing, and self-sufficiency. County staff members are also working with contracted providers to encourage cross referrals based on client needs, and have been holding regular provider meetings to share resources and information to better coordinate care for clients.

Living Situation. Sixty-nine percent of those enrolled in services during 2008 were homeless, intensifying the barriers these clients face to employment.

Living Situation		
Homeless	134	68.7 percent
Not Homeless	61	31.3 percent

Age Group. Those served were all adults ranging in age from 18 to 74.

Age Group		
0 to 5		
6 to 10		
11 to 13		
14 to 17		
18 to 34	134	68.7 percent
35 to 59	58	29.7 percent
60 to 74	3	1.5 percent
75 to 84		
85 and over		

Gender. Those served by this strategy were evenly split between men and women.

Gender		
Male	94	48.5 percent
Female	100	51.5 percent

SUCCESS STORY

Yolanda heard about the YWCA Employment and Housing Stability (EHS) program through the WorkSource Office in Auburn and was referred for job search assistance. She was looking for a position at a bakery or at a nursing home. At nights, she attended the Art Institute of Seattle with the goal of becoming a pastry chef, and she hoped to find a job that would help her develop her skills. Yolanda's partner, Cal, was also unemployed, having been laid off from his welding job recently, and was also enrolled in the YWCA EHS program.

Yolanda and Cal live in a rental house in Algona with their four children and one grandson. When Yolanda was first referred to the program, they owed one month's back rent, and were not able to pay the current month's rent. Once enrolled, Yolanda began receiving case management assistance, including referrals for rent and utility assistance, food, and clothing. The YWCA helped Yolanda with her job search, teaching her how to market herself effectively, revise her resume, interview successfully, and use the Internet and e-mail for job searches and applications. Yolanda's efforts paid off. She was offered a full-time nursing assistant position for \$10.24/hour, as well as a part-time cashier's position for \$9/hour. She worked both jobs and continued going to school at night.

EHS continued to work with Cal, who was offered a \$12/hour position as a welder. Yolanda was offered additional hours at her nursing position and was able to leave her cashier job. The YWCA EHS program supported the family with additional services, including work tools and supplies, transportation assistance, Adopt-a-Family presents for Christmas, referrals to low income energy assistance, and the Emergency Feeding program. The family is now in the retention part of the EHS program and working on creating a budget that will allow them to pay their rent and bills and begin saving money. They will be referred to the YWCA's partnership with Express Credit Union for banking and money management services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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